

## Camping in Undesignated Sites



Camping in undesignated sites is a special privilege in Glacier. This privilege can continue only if each camper accepts the responsibility to minimize their impacts and practice Leave No

Trace skills and ethics. Plants, wildlife, water, and the aesthetics of pristine off-trail areas can only be protected by your special care. Backcountry Use Permits are required and requests are

handled on a case by case basis. Approval is based on established criteria. Undesignated campsites will generally only be considered for parties choosing to travel in pristine areas well away from maintained trail corridors.

### Trip Preparation



Grizzly and cub

Familiarize yourself with the area and carry the appropriate maps; USGS 7.5 minute quads are recommended. Read the park’s bear information handouts. Bears are more likely to be surprised away from trails. In addition to the proper clothing and footwear, the following items are strongly recommended:

- self-contained stove (wood fires are prohibited)
- rope (at least 40 feet) and rigging to hang food properly, or an NPS approved bear-resistant food container
- non-odorous food
- tent and sleeping pads (cutting of trees or limbs is prohibited)
- plastic bags for packing out garbage.
- trowel for proper human waste disposal.

### Route Selection

When traveling off-trail, try to walk on durable surfaces such as rocks, snow, gravel-covered streambeds, dry grass-lands, or dry sedge meadows. Spread out while walking. Routes through heavy brush or sparsely vegetated forest areas are also good. Don’t make permanent route markings such as tree blazes, paint spots, or rock cairns. If you must temporarily mark a route, do so with small rock cairns and dismantle

them as you leave. Never pull rocks that are embedded in soil, especially in the alpine, as it may lead to the destruction of the adjacent plants and begin a cycle of erosion. Avoid disturbing all animals as they have sought out remote areas intentionally, and disturbance may jeopardize their survival, especially those with young. Avoid areas where prime food source for bears are avail-able.

### Campsite Selection



One important consideration is whether you can find a place to hang food at least 10 feet above the ground and 4 feet away from adjacent trees. One method is to fasten a rope up a tree, then extend the rope to another tree and drape it over a stout branch. Allow the rope to sag in the middle and attach your food sack to it. Then pull the rope taut, suspending the food sack. Be sure it is 4 feet from each tree trunk and at least 10 feet off the ground. In alpine areas, you will be required to store food in a NPS approved bear resistant food container at least 100 feet from your campsite. Designated permit issuing stations have a limited number of bear resistant food contain-ers available to be checked out.

Choosing a durable site that will accom-modate the entire group is an extremely important consideration. Stay at least 100 feet away from water and avoid areas that show evidence of use from other campers. Select durable campsites that do not contain fragile vegetation, the loss of which could result in soil erosion. Durable areas include snow, rock, gravel, dry grass or sedge-covered meadows, forest areas with thick duff layers and little vegetation, and other non-vegetated sites. Low-growing alpine shrubs are very susceptible to perma-nent damage. Avoid camping in any sensitive wildlife habitat.

*“When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world.”*  
**John Muir**

Leave No Trace  
Camping Skills and Ethics



Leave No Trace Principles

- ☐ Plan Ahead and Prepare
- ☐ Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
- ☐ Properly Dispose of Waste
- ☐ Leave What You Find
- ☐ Be Considerate of Other Visitors
- ☐ Minimize Campfire Impacts
- ☐ Respect Wildlife

In camp, wear soft-soled, flat-bottom shoes. Do your cooking and eating well away, and down-wind, from the sleeping area on a durable surface such as rock, snow, or gravel. Remember that dry fuels can be ignited very quickly by your stove. Bathe, wash dishes, and dispose of waste water at least 100 feet from surface water. Use only biodegradable soap, if any, and avoid leaving food

scraps in water or on the ground. Pack out all garbage (this should be minimal if you have planned your trip well). Secure food and garbage at all times when not attended. Do not alter your campsite by digging out rocks, moving logs, or building windbreaks. Keep sweat soaked clothing, footwear, and packs secured or hung as many animals will destroy these items while attempting to get salt. If you have removed any sticks or small rocks from your sleeping area try to replace them by scattering debris. Help preserve your park for the future by cleaning up after those who haven't been as considerate as you. The wildlife thank you for being careful. Stand back and scan your site as you are leaving - are you pleased with what you see? Strive to leave no trace.

Human Waste Disposal

Urinate on rocks, gravel, or snow to prevent destructive digging by animals. Bury excrement in shallow cat holes 6-8 inches deep, at least 200 feet from water. Fill the hole with organic soil and disguise the digging. If you are on snow,

be sure you are at least 100 yards from any water course. Pack out all toilet paper. Under certain conditions, you may be required to pack out solid human waste in some sensitive areas.

Water Warning

All park waters may contain the protozoan *Giardia lamblia*. When ingested, the reproductive cysts from this animal can lead to Giardiasis, which causes cramps

and diarrhea. You can protect yourself from this disease by bringing drinking water to a boil or using an approved filter.

Undesignated Camping Permit Checklist



Pumpelly's Pillar

It is your responsibility to know, respect, and practice “Leave No Trace” wildland ethics by complying with the following regulations:

- ☐ Party size is limited to a maximum of six (6) campers (May 1 to November 20).
- ☐ Camping is limited to a maximum of two (2) nights at any one (1) campsite.
- ☐ Wood fires are prohibited. Use self-contained cookstoves only.
- ☐ Campsites **must** be located a minimum of 100 feet from lakes, streams, and rivers.
- ☐ Campsites **must** be located a minimum of ½ mile **and** out of sight of any trail corridor, designated campground, patrol cabin, fire lookout, roadway, developed area, or other camping party.
- ☐ All food, cookware, and garbage must be suspended a minimum of 10 feet above the ground and 4 feet from any tree trunk, and secured at least 100 feet from your campsite at all times, except mealtime. In alpine areas, an approved Bear Resistant Food Container is required.
- ☐ Stock are not permitted in undesignated campsites.
- ☐ Utilize a “cat hole” to deposit human waste in organic soil, at least 200 feet from water. Pack out your toilet paper. Urinate on rocks, gravel, or snow to minimize vegetation damage and destructive digging.

Nyack - Coal Creek  
Camping Zone Policies

The Nyack - Coal Creek Camping Zone offers the opportunity to experience a higher level of wilderness challenge and risk. Access to the area typically requires fording the Middle Fork of the Flathead River, a potentially hazardous endeavor, depending on the season. Several unbridged stream crossings, rugged trail conditions, and lower levels of visitor use are just a few factors that make this area attractive to **experienced** backcountry travelers.

In addition to the regulations listed above, the following policies apply to the Nyack - Coal Creek Camping Zone.

- ☐ Campsites must be located at least 100 feet from streams and lakes, at least ½ mile from any patrol cabin or designated campground, and 50 yards and out of sight and sound of any trail corridor. **Camping on or near the trail is prohibited.**
- ☐ Due to brushy vegetation and heavy downfall in many areas, finding a suitable campsite may be **extremely difficult**. Plan ahead and look for a campsite well before nightfall.